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“I cherish my past, I accept my present, and I dream for my future.”

When I think about my past, naturally a lot of things come to mind: my most embarrassing moments, the times where I was at my happiest, the times where all I wanted to do was break down and cry. However, all these things add up to who I am at the present. Reflecting on my present, it has made me think about all that I have accomplished to get myself to where I am today. I am living out my dreams at Bloomsburg University and because I am here at this university, I will eventually in the future graduate and become what I have always wanted to become: a special education teacher.

One specific event in my past that always comes to mind when I think about my life so far is my first leading role in my high school’s musical. I am a very musical person and specifically I love to sing. Singing is my true passion, and in high school I was a part of everyone singing ensemble we had to offer. I also love to act, and because musicals include both of my favorite things, I had been trying out for my school’s fall musicals since freshman year. I had gotten chorus my freshman and sophomore year, but this year felt a bit different for me. I was a junior in high school and I was now officially considered an “upperclassman”. We were going to be doing the Wizard of Oz and I was Glinda the Good Witch in the production I did in my eighth grade year.

Feeling a bit over confident with two years of our musicals under my belt, I went and auditioned after school one day. At this point, I was freaking out inside but on the outside I was portraying myself as calm, cool, and collected. When I got the email saying I had gotten a callback, needless to say I was ecstatic. However, the bar was just raised immensely because now the competition was fiercer than ever. Everyone knew what part they wanted, and at this point all I really wanted was just a part. A speaking and singing role would make me so happy. When I read lines for my callback, they put me as Glinda the Good Witch a lot which led me to believe they wanted me for that part. I was feeling pretty good about myself after callbacks, but I was still extremely nervous to get the email that contained the callback list. After a few excruciatingly long and anxious days, the callback list was officially sent out. It was nothing like what I expected to say the least.

I had been given the part of the Cowardly Lion. While sitting in my family room with my mother and brother, I was staring at the screen in complete shock with my mom saying “What?! What part did you get?!” because she was just as nervous as me. When I answered her, it was almost a way of me trying to convince myself that I was not crazy about what I was reading. How could I possibly have gotten this part? I was trying to rack my brain and while my mother and brother were cheering me on, all I could say was “I can’t do this.” I was so scared because I did not feel like I could take on a role that was completely outside my comfort zone. I had never had to act out a funny role with an accent. I was unbelievably scared, but in that moment I knew that I had to accept the role. It just meant that I had to work ten times harder than expected.

Learning how to become the Cowardly Lion was one of the hardest things I have ever had to do. However, through my determination and perseverance, I gave the performance of my life. I was the Cowardly Lion, and I worked my pillow vest that made me look like Santa Clause under my gigantic furry suit and face makeup. When I look back to that time in my life, I realize how happy I was that I was able to accomplish my dream of becoming a leading role, even though it was most definitely not what I expected.

Presently, at Bloomsburg University, I am pursuing my newest dream: becoming a special education teacher. I have known for a while that was what I wanted to become in life, but college has made me sway a bit. As intimidating as college is in itself, I was feeling a little down and doubting my decision of my major before classes had started. Again, I was fearful of what I was going into. I asked myself questions such as “Do I have what it takes to help these children,” or “Will I be able to keep a 3.0 GPA to stay in this major?” With these questions running around in my brain, I entered my special education class a little weary of what I was about to endure.

I was so pleasantly surprised to find how much I absolutely loved the class from the start. Walking into that class, my heart was beating harder than it ever has. I had this never ending fear that I would hate the class and that everything I had wanted in life I would have to change. However, I had nothing to worry about. My teacher is absolutely amazing and truly inspires me to do my best by these children that I am going to eventually teach. I have never been so interested in a class before and I actually look forward to going to it every Tuesday and Thursday. Although I was scared on my first day, she calmed my fears and reassured me that special education was the right career path for me. I find myself a little bit sad because I only have three official class days left because I enjoy this class so much. I accomplished this first semester in this class and this gives me the confidence for the future to go just as well as this first semester has in my special education class.

When given this project, I immediately came up with events to write about for my past and my present. However, when I got to my future I came up with a blank. I have always pictured my future as happily married with a family and the career I have always wanted, but I could never pinpoint an exact moment in my future that I really wanted to write about. Then, I started to picture my future classroom. I started to imagine what I wanted it to look like: colorful, fun, open, and friendly. Then I started to picture the students I will have sitting in it, and I started to think about how I will grow to know them and care about them.

A moment that I can picture in my future is my first time really making an influence in one of my student’s lives. I can imagine myself on my last day of my first year teaching. I can see myself saying goodbye to each of my students and being satisfied with myself and how much progress my class really had made this whole year. I dream that I am utterly happy with how my first year had been. I want to be that teacher that these children will be telling their friends about in college of how much they really loved them. I think that is my true dream for my future, and that is something I strive to accomplish in the future. After accomplishing all my schooling and personal goals, I hope to be able to have that effect on not only that one student, but all my students in the future.

“I cherish my past, I accept my present, and I dream for my future.” is a quote that I believe connects my stories together. I cherish my past because I had never overcome my fear of being the Cowardly Lion, I would have never been able to see my full potential. I accept my present gladly because of that special education class I am more than excited to take more classes that make me closer to finishing my degree. I dream for my future because I really do hope my dream of being able to be satisfied with my how my first year of teaching went and to be able to know that because of me those students have made progress into becoming older, wiser, and eventually adults. Without my past and present, I would have never been able to dream of the future I wish to have.